

IT-Driven Organizational Identity Change: A Longitudinal Inquiry

Research in Progress

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Abstract

While organizational scholars are increasingly interested in issues of identity, in-depth empirical studies analyzing the actual process of identity change have lagged, particularly when the process is triggered by IT-related transformational change (Alvesson et al. 2008). In this longitudinal case study, we follow the identity change process of librarians following the digitization of their work environment. We use segments of Hatch & Schultz's (2002) organizational identity dynamics model to uncover the provisional identities experienced by librarians over time. We also illustrate how the librarians' image, as mirrored by the patrons, led the librarians to put forward initiatives to impress on the patrons ideas of "who they were" and "who they could be." This duality is explained by the ambiguous nature of information technology, which can be interpreted as both an opportunity and a threat concurrently.

Keywords: Organizational identity, organizational image, IT-driven change, digital library